

The Thirties

virtuous, had become phosphorescent; the appetite for money unrestrained, a raging lust. In his Encyclical *Caritate Christi Compulsi*, Pope Pius XI diagnosed the cause of the world's confusion as 'that lust of earthly goods which the Pagan poet branded with the name of "the accursed hunger for gold", and which St. Paul does not hesitate to call the root of all evil/ and in the United States Senator Hiram Johnson, summing up the results of an inquiry into American loans, spoke of 'this sordid tale, at once grotesque and tragic . . . due to the money madness of our people, the greed and even worse of our international bankers.' An attempted synthesis of Christianity and Socialism, and a readiness on the part of the wealthy to apologise for their wealth, might obscure this 'accursed hunger for gold', but could not restrain it, or prevent its ravages.

An occasion for righteous indignation in which all Governments could participate since the interests of none were involved, was provided by the publication of a report by a Commission appointed by the League of Nations to inquire into conditions in Liberia. This Report, according to *The Times*, 'exposed a maladministration so cruel and so corrupt, and an exploitation of native workers by their negro masters so shameless, that the civilised world will not be satisfied until effective measures have been taken to substitute a system of justice for a regime of brute force and to establish decent conditions of labour/ Other newspapers wrote in the same strain. It was one of the few occasions on which the Press and the League Assembly were unanimous,

though whether their unanimity appreciably
affected conditions
in Liberia, is doubtful.

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Something vastly more important than conditions
in Liberia
required, and soon held, the civilised world's
attention. The
economic blizzard had continued blowing with
unabated
intensity, unemployment figures mounting until
three million